

**Friendship Heights
Transportation Management District
Advisory Committee
June 11, 2013**

Voting Members

Aurelio Baca-Asher

Campbell Graeb

Cobey R. Kuff

Allison Lazare (Vice Chair)

Ann F. Lewis

John Mertens

The JBG Companies

Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights

WP Project Developer, LLC

United Educators Insurance

Friendship Heights Village

Friendship Heights Village

Non-voting Members

Vacant

M-NCPPC

TMD Staff

Sandra L. Brecher

-Representing DOT Director

Nakengi Byrd

Jim Carlson

Sheila Wilson

MCDOT/Transit Services Division-Commuter Services

MCDOT/Transit Services Division-Commuter Services

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Absent

James Calderwood

Barbara Condos

Joe Dixon

Capt. David Falcinelli

Tiffany Gee (Chair)

Kenneth Hartman

R. Mallory Starr

Chevy Chase Village Board of Managers

Town of Somerset

GEICO

Montgomery County Police

Chevy Chase Land Company

B-CC Services Center

Somerset House Management Association

Guests

Bob Joiner

Jeffrey Slavin

The Agenda News

Town of Somerset

Abbreviations:

BRT/RTV = Bus Rapid Transit/Rapid Vehicle Transit

Item 1, 2 & 3 – Introductions/Minutes/Chair Comments: Vice-Chair Allison Lazare called the meeting to order. Members and guests introduced themselves. The meeting minutes were tabled for lack of quorum. The Committee thanked **Ann Lewis**, whose term ends June 30th, for her service to the Advisory Board.

Item 4 – DC Commuter Bus Tax: Jim Carlson explained that the DC Council's proposed commuter bus tax has received strong negative reaction from Congress, the governor's office, and other public officials who feel the \$5 per trip, per bus tax will negatively impact commuting. Although bus operators will be taxed, the cost will likely be past on to commuters who may reduce their use of transit. DC Council final vote is next week; however, the measure was approved during a straw vote. The Committee discussed drafting a letter of opposition and circulating to the other members not present. *[D.C. Council Chairman Phil Mendelson indicated in a subsequent statement that the proposed tax will not pass Council.]*

Item 5 – Proposed BRT Lanes: **Jeffery Slavin** explained that the proposed draft plan for Phase I of the Bus Rapid Transit/Rapid Transit Vehicle project (BRT/RTV) is to run a section of the system along the median of Wisconsin Avenue between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. The Village of Friendship Heights and others in the community oppose this portion of BRT/RTV citing environmental and pedestrian impacts.

Mr. Slavin indicated that there is not an urgent need for the Committee to act because the plan has not been formally approved. He also clarified that the community approves of BRT/RTV in general, but not for that section of Wisconsin Avenue. Metro's Red Line is expected to reach capacity by 2040 and the County is looking for other transit options.

Campbell Graeb commented that having two high-speed transit ways on the same corridor is redundant and suggests continued investment in expanding Metrorail.

John Mertens recalled a statement that up to 70 percent of traffic in Friendship Heights is through traffic.

The Committee discussed having someone who is knowledgeable about BRT/RTV present an update so members can gain more information on the project.

Sande Brecher said that the Transitway is an option that will move commuters beyond Shady Grove into the Clarksburg area. She said that as a transit alternative the BRT/RTV system is low cost and provides more flexibility.

Item 6 – Committee Chair/Vice Chair Elections, FY 14: **Mr. Carlson** said that there is no term limit for the Chair and Vice Chair positions, so **Tiffany Gee** and **Allison Lazare** were eligible for reelection.

The meeting minutes and elections were tabled.

Item 7 - Commuter Services Updates:

- Bike To Work Day was a success – Thanks to member volunteers **Barbara Condos**, **Allison Lazare** and **John Mertens** for their assistance.
- Bikeshare public meetings June 24th, 25th and 26th – Friendship Heights is June 24th at the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center, 4805 Edgemoor Lane, Bethesda.

Ms. Brecher announced that **Ann Root**, MC Department of Transportation, is the new bikeshare manager.

For next year's Bike to Work Day, **Cobey Kuff** suggested giving drawstring backpacks to participants because they have a good functional use for bikers. **Mr. Slavin** said the District should partner with Friendship Heights for the next Bike to Work Day event.

Item 8 - Around the Room: Other issues discussed:

- Update on the crosswalk study
- The Fencing off trees on Wisconsin for pending construction
- The need for more bike racks and other biking infrastructure
- Unsafe vehicle turns at the Wisconsin and Willard intersection

Mr. Kuff said that he will be putting in more bike racks in the Wisconsin Place garage; however, he wanted to make sure the racks are up to the County's code.

Next meeting: TBD